



One Hundred First Legislature - First Session - 2009
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 503

Chairperson: Bill Avery
Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs
Date of Hearing: February 20, 2009

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 503 will provide shooting range operations with guidelines and protections that would allow these ranges to continue operating when faced with urbanization.

Over the years shooting ranges have been established in many locations across Nebraska. They provide significant benefits to the many sportsmen and sportswomen in our state as well as valuable training for law enforcement agencies and departments. Today, as our state becomes more urbanized, many shooting facilities are being closed in by surrounding development. This results in shooting ranges becoming subject to a growing number of complaints of various nuisances of one kind or another, even though the shooting range may have been in place for many years and operating reasonably and safely.

The bill would establish a reasonable amount of protection for ranges that are currently in existence but facing outside threats by the continued urbanization in our state. In so doing, these shooting ranges would be afforded reasonable relief from facing potential litigation for inconsequential actions.

The key elements this bill addresses are that shooting ranges shall operate safely and shall not be subject to local ordinances that would prohibit the normal operation of the range. This means that cities, counties, villages and other political subdivisions cannot pass zoning, noise, or discharge restrictions that might be unreasonable for the purpose of forcing ranges to close. It also establishes that ranges that are currently in operation shall be allowed to operate without regard to any future ordinances that are passed in regard to zoning, noise or the discharge of firearms. The ranges must operate during reasonable hours subject to local zoning restrictions where applicable with special exceptions made for military and law enforcement to practice night exercises. If there are range violations in conflict with current rules, regulations, resolutions or ordinances, the range would have the opportunity to address and correct these problems within an acceptable time frame. The ranges would also be allowed to expand and improve upon the facility in the interest of public safety and the continued use of the facility.

Principal Introducer:

Senator Chris Langemeier